

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this Application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 remain pending in the present Application. No new matter has been added.

By way of summary, the Official Action presents the following issues: Claims 1-3, 8-11 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Yukiko (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/201134); Claims 4, 6, 7, 12, 14, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Yukiko in view of Wallace (U.S. Patent No. 6,473,467); and Claims 16 and 18 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

The outstanding Official Action has rejected Claims 1-3, 8-11 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Yukiko. Applicants have submitted herewith cover an accurate English translation of the priority document of the present Application. As the priority Application was filed January 24, 2000 as Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-014931, it is respectfully submitted that Yukiko may not be considered prior art against the pending claims. The Yukiko reference was published on July 18, 2000, which is later than that of the priority document of the present Application. It is therefore respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

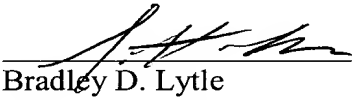
Likewise, as the rejection of Claims 4, 6, 7, 12, 14, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as well as the rejection of Claims 5 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 rely on the Yukiko reference as the primary reference, Applicants respectfully submit that the accurate English translation of the present Application's priority document remove Yukiko from consideration as a primary reference. It is therefore, respectfully requested that the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103 also be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Consequently, in view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present Application, including Claims 1-18, is patently distinguished over the prior art, in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,

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